

HERITAGE AREA BULLETIN BOARD -- FEBRUARY 2003

The snows of February have slowed, but not stopped all activity in Washington. We have a budget for FY 2003 and now are just enjoying a good old fashion winter.

Legislation

It is the last week in February and already Congress has proposed a good number of heritage area bills. In the Senate the following bills have been introduced: S. 180 National Aviation Heritage Area Act, S. 211 Northern Rio Grande Heritage Area Act, S. 230 Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area Act of 2003, S. 276 Southern Campaign of the Revolution Heritage Area Study Act, and S.323 Atchafalaya National Heritage Area Act. In the House, heritage area bills include HR 280 National Aviation Heritage Area Act, HR 505 Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area Act, HR 567 Northern Neck National Heritage Area Study Act and HR 744 to direct a study of the suitability and feasibility of establishing the Southern Campaign of the Revolution Heritage Area in South Carolina. In legislation related to heritage areas, HR 521 to establish the Steel Industry National Historic Site was reintroduced to locate a national park unit in the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area.

Two groups of heritage area supporters braved the February weather and visited Washington. A group representing eight of the eleven proposed heritage areas that passed the Senate in the 107th Congress met for two days on February 12-13. They sponsored a lunch on the hill for members and staff to learn more about their work. The next week the Alliance of National Heritage Areas was in town and they warmed up a snowy week with their traditional reception in the Rayburn Foyer.

In other legislative news the Senate Energy Committee's Subcommittee on National Parks (chaired by Senator Thomas of Wyoming) has scheduled an oversight hearing on heritage area for **March 13, 2003**.

Budget Update

National heritage areas made gains in the recently passed Federal 2003 appropriations as funding for the Heritage Partnership programs rose from \$13,306,000 in FY 2002 to \$14,374,000 in FY 2003. While this was only a million dollars above last year's appropriation, it was \$6,639,000 above the administration's request for the program. The funding amounts for the individual areas are listed below. Note that the Blue Ridge has not yet been designated as a national heritage area.

America's Agricultural Heritage Partnership	---	\$ 750,000
Augusta Canal	---	\$ 600,000
Automobile	---	\$ 500,000
Blue Ridge	---	\$ 250,000
Cache Le Poudre	---	\$ 50,000
Cane River	---	\$ 995,000
Delaware and Lehigh	---	\$ 850,000
Erie Canalway	---	\$ 400,000
Essex	---	\$1,000,000
Hudson River	---	\$ 600,000
Illinois & Michigan Canal	---	\$ 750,000
John H Chafee Blackstone River	---	\$ 800,000
Lackawanna	---	\$ 650,000
National Coal	---	\$ 210,000
Ohio and Erie Canal	---	\$1,000,000
Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers	---	\$ 850,000
Rivers of Steel	---	\$1,000,000
Schuykill River	---	\$ 500,000
Shenandoah Valley Battlefields	---	\$ 500,000
South Carolina	---	\$1,000,000

Tennessee Civil War	---	\$ 210,000
Wheeling	---	\$ 580,000
Yuma Crossing	---	\$ 210,000
Administration	---	\$ 119,000

Heritage Areas on the WEB

The National Park Service heritage areas website is up and running at www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas/. The site is already receiving over 1,800 hits a month in its first two months and these were quality hits averaging 12 minutes a visit! Your editor is getting a lot of calls from web visitors who want to know even more and are calling after a web visit with follow on questions. Do check out the section on **Reports and Publications**, recent additions including a recent report on "Developing a Research Agenda for National Heritage Areas" and an archive of all past Heritage Area Bulletin Boards back to February 2002.

Upcoming Events

Alliance for National Heritage Areas Spring Meeting	Nashville TN	April 23-26, 2003
International Heritage Development Conference	Pittsburgh PA	June 7-11, 2003
Annual Meeting National Trust for Historic Preservation	Denver CO	Oct 1-5, 2003